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H Y S T E R I A :

THE HYSTERICAL CONSTITUTION OR TEMPERAMENT:

WITH SUGGESTIONS AS TO ITS

PATHOLOGY AND TREATMENT,

BY

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HYSTERIA AND ITS TREATMENT,

etc., etc.

IN the early part of last year, 1865, I published a little work on the "Relief and Curability of Epilepsy," which was based upon a Paper or Essay on that disease read by me at a meeting of the Harveian Medical Society of London, having this title, "In what class of cases, and under what circumstances, may we reasonably hope for cure in Epilepsy?" It gives me much satisfaction to know that this Essay has been very favourably received by the medical profession both in this country and in America; and, therefore, I am the more induced to publish the present essay, on another, and cognate Nervous Disease—Hysteria, not unfrequently almost as distressing and intractable as Epilepsy too commonly is found to be.

In that Essay I treated briefly of the origin, "nature, and attendant circumstances of this especial disturbance in the animal economy, together with reference to the appropriate remedies which when duly administered were, it was thought, calculated to afford *relief*, and even in some cases *cure* in that formidable disease. Holding, as I do, the opinion, that Epilepsy and Hysteria are cognate disease, are pathologically akin, the one to the other, I need scarcely inform my readers of the present Essay on Hysteria, that some of the remarks contained herein may, if not actually in substance, in words, yet in thought or idea, be found already expressed in my former Essay on Epilepsy now alluded to.

There can, I think, be no reasonable doubt in the mind of observant and intelligent practitioners of the medical art, that diseases, disorders, and derangements of the nervous system, have of late years greatly multiplied in number, if not

in severity of degree. More than this, not only have they greatly multiplied, but perhaps it is not saying too much to assert, that, even at this present time, they are greatly upon the increase. From whatever cause or causes the increase in this class of diseases may arise, and it would not be a difficult task to point out some amongst others, as tending to produce them, the fact, as it appears to me, remains indisputable. Some physicians affirm that formerly human beings, men, women, and children, were generally stronger and more robust, and less frequently attacked with disease than they are at the present time; in fact according to the opinion of such, there was a less amount of disease as well relative as absolute amongst mankind at large.

However this may have been, whether true or not, the causes which tend to produce diseases of one or more parts of the nervous system have greatly increased, and it is much to be feared that this increase does but keep pace, *pari passu*, with the everyday increase of population and of progressive civilisation. Especially is this the case as regards residents in large towns and cities, in which the daily toils and burdensome anxieties of life make increasing demands upon the nervous energy and brain-power of all engaged in the arduous struggle for life and social position.

The older physicians do not, in their records of diseases, treat at length of diseases of the nerves; in fact, paralysis and convulsions of more or fewer parts of the body would seem to be all, or nearly all, the diseases of this class that they recognised as such, although a careful and attentive perusal of their writings will show, that they had observed and recorded many diseases to which they affixed no names, and to which they did not, or could not, assign appropriate causes; diseases which, at the present day, by the aid of a more enlightened physiology and pathology, we know to belong to the class of nervous diseases; the phenomena they present to our observation indicating most clearly to the intelligent practitioner, some lesion in the functions if not in the organism, of the nervous structure of the human frame.

The chief object aimed at, and which we design to keep steadily in view, is to submit to the notice of the readers of this essay, whatever, up to the present time, is received as truth, in relation to the physiology, pathology, and treatment of the disease under consideration; whatever may be reasonably dictated by an experience, now of some years' standing; and whatever may be considerably suggested by *à priori* reasoning, as probable to be of service in the remedial manage-

ment of one of the most troublesome and intractable disorders to which the human being is subjected.

It is not the place now to speak of the higher functions of the nervous mass, or of those affections of the nervous system, attended with evidences of *impaired* and *perverted* intelligence, thought, perception, consciousness, volition, imagination, memory, and other so-called mental powers, yet it will be manifest, that this domain of pathology is now being very widely extended, and will embrace a department of medical observation and reflection, not included in any other region of professional oversight and solicitude.

The ruder anatomy of the parts concerned in this class of disorders may be stated at once, as simple, and far from complex; consisting on the one hand of the entire nervous mass of the human framework; and on the other hand, of the blood-vessels that supply, and, in many cases, that accompany the nervous mass in its grosser parts, or in its numerous ramifications throughout the body. In cases, however, of *impaired* or *perverted* motion, as in paralysis, and in convulsions for example, there is another anatomical element that must be taken into account and this element is one, that hitherto, in nervous diseases, has not received the attention that it obviously deserves, I mean by this, the muscular tissue, a tissue, the proper and healthy function of which is contraction or contractility.

By the nervous mass of the human framework will, of course, be understood, the brain, including the cerebrum and cerebellum, the medulla oblongata, the spinal cord, the nervous ganglia, situated in various parts of the body, as well as the ramifications of the various and numerous trunks connected with the cerebro-spinal axis and the great sympathetic or nerve of organic life.

The application of anatomy to the nervous masses informs us of the intimate structure of the brain and nerves under their different forms, and, at the same time, makes us acquainted with their manner of distribution and arrangement, as ganglia, trunks, and branches, throughout the various parts of the body.

The universally acknowledged importance of nervous affections, and the deep interest now felt in this extensive department of medical observation, as well as the active and refined inquiry devoted thereto, sufficiently warrant any amount of renewed attention to the subject even supposing that little more than a renewed attention be asked and given to facts already known. The very intricacy itself,

affords one of those instances wherein new conclusions and a nearer approximation to truth may be rendered possible, we might even say probable, merely by recasting the order of these facts, regarding them from new points of view, and by using them in new or in different considerations.

In hospitals and other kindred establishments for the reception and treatment of the sick, the student and practitioner commonly enough meet with affections of various parts or organs of the nervous system, yet, for the most part, those particular cases of this class of disorders which are there to be found, are by no means such as come under observation and treatment in the course of daily professional life; in this latter condition, that is in the great hospital of the world at large, many of these cases of affections of the nervous system, present themselves to our notice under most troublesome, and frequently under very unsatisfactory conditions; in fact they occasionally, and especially in very civilised life, are amongst the most intractable disorders that the practitioner can have to do with. We are often called to see diseases of this class, in ordinary practice, in which by a careful and attentive examination of the patient, we may be convinced that we have to do with a morbidly physical condition of the body; whilst, at the same time, the exalted exaggerated state of the imagination of the same patient, magnifies to himself or to herself, as the case may be, their sufferings, and the danger of their condition; the medical attendant, knowing all the while, that the disorder is as evidently a physical disorder, as an attack of jaundice or of dropsy in the same patient would be.

Fortunately, however, such disorders are rarely fatally dangerous, although exceedingly troublesome, and whilst they do not frequently shorten life, yet, nevertheless, they despoil it of its pleasures, and they cause much anxiety and annoyance to the sufferer, to their friends, and to all around them. By their influence on the moral nature of the patients, they are led to look at all objects that surround them from a wrong point of view, and fashioning their conduct accordingly; their behaviour is not unfrequently a mystery as well to themselves, as to their acquaintance; in fact, their whole being appears to have undergone an entire metamorphosis, a metamorphosis however, which is always unhappily to their discomfort and disadvantage.

This disease, *hysteria*, the subject of the present Essay, when presented to our observation in practice, in fully developed, I will not say in exaggerated cases, not unfrequently offers to

our notice, instances in which are comprised, one, or more, or on rare occasions, simultaneously, all these three perplexing and important disturbances of the bodily and mental functions: namely, *impaired* and *perverted motion*, *impaired* and *perverted sensation*, and *impaired* and *perverted intelligence*.

Sometimes the hysterical affection which we may be called upon to treat or relieve, is attended with one, sometimes with another of these abnormal, unhealthy conditions; yet, as a general proposition, it may be stated, that in very many, in most, if not in all such cases, the volitional power, or, to speak in more simple language, to express in plainer terms the condition referred to we may say that the due, proper, healthy command over the will, is *impaired*, *antagonised*, and occasionally even *overcome*. In my opinion, if there be any one physical bodily ailment or disease whatever which might be regarded as forming, or constituting a connecting link between diseases of the body and diseases of the mind, or, in other words, between *mental* and *bodily* disease, it is this one now under consideration, *hysteria*. It is in my power to give some striking and remarkable instances of the truth of this statement just now made, with reference to the position which hysteria may be said to hold as a link between mental and bodily disease, disorder, or derangement. Sometime ago, I had under my care a patient affected with hysteria, *chronic*, be it observed, not *acute*, who, during my attendance, frequently assured me, that when thus affected, it was at times as though the *mental* condition was as much altered as was the *bodily* condition. However this may be, I can confidently affirm, that occasionally, during this attack of illness, the power the patient possessed to penetrate into, and to discriminate between, the various shades of character in those around, whether attendants, friends, acquaintances, or strangers, was very great. The patient was certainly more quick at observation, more clever, more ingenious, and penetrating, in reading countenances, and in interpreting motives of conduct and action, than any of those around, whether as visitors, or as attendants.

It will be a more fitting occasion to do this, when I come to advert to the symptomatology of hysteria, and of other nervous disorders: for, in my judgment, it is mainly, by observing and recording such, and similar facts and observations, that we can at all hope to unravel with success the almost inextricable perplexity in which at present many nervous diseases still remain. Nothing, I am convinced, will tend more to draw aside the curtain which as yet conceals from

our clear, distinct perception of the true causation of nervous diseases, than a careful, patient, laborious observation and record of these symptoms and phenomena as they present themselves to our notice, as medical observers and practitioners.

Be it observed, that very few, even of the worst cases although attended with distressing and painful concomitants, are but seldom attended with fatal results; and even if it were so, in my opinion after-death examinations of the body would do but little towards revealing to us the true causation of the diseases themselves. And even in the living subject, whilst under medical care and treatment, the application of organic chemistry, and the use of the microscope from time to time will, I fear, but in few instances, be productive of very fruitful and satisfactory results. Still, however, these valuable aids to diagnosis and treatment must not be neglected, whilst a proper value should be assigned to any pathological facts with which their application may happily furnish us. We must gladly avail ourselves of any and of every adjunct that may be reasonably expected to throw additional light upon our present obscurity, and so to rescue us from error and from ignorance, the two worst enemies to human health and happiness.

A better acquaintance with diseases of the nervous system, or, in other words, the removal of error and ignorance in regard to them, will do more than almost anything else to rescue many of our suffering and afflicted fellow human beings from the relentless hands of the pretenders to medical science and practice scattered up and down throughout the metropolis and the country at large. The medical name of the disease under consideration—Hysteria—as is well known, is derived from the Greek word for the uterus or womb, *Hystera*—I forbear the use of the Greek characters of the word—from the ancient and long continued, but erroneous opinion that it arose from some disorder in that organ; but, inasmuch as the disease in question is not confined to the female sex, this opinion must be now discarded.

I have seen several well-marked cases of the disease in male subject, but I do not remember ever to have seen it in either male or female subject until after the age of puberty, and more commonly in both sexes during the period of manhood or of womanhood. I propose to treat subsequently of this period of life in both sexes, and of the influence of the passions at that period, as factors in the production of nervous diseases of one kind or another. There are certain portions of the

nervous masses of the body situated within the abdomen in both sexes, which, in my opinion, have much more to do in the production of hysteria than has been commonly supposed, and of these two nervous masses, the spermatic, and hypogastric plexus of nerves play a most important part. And to the former of these, when disordered either in function or in structure, we may refer very many of the troublesome, perplexing phenomena observed in severe, obstinate, intractable cases of hysteria.

Let us now, for a moment, consider how, in what manner, and by what means the *spermatic plexus* is formed, made up, or constituted, and in attempting to effect this little piece of descriptive anatomy, it will be sufficient for present purposes to take as our starting point the convex or lower part of the seminular ganglion, the result, for the most part, of anastomosing branches of the great sympathetic or intercostal nerve, and from the lower or convex part of which many nervous filaments or branches are given off, which filaments or branches, reinforced by others from the trunk itself of the great sympathetic or intercostal nerves, form behind the kidneys a plexus of nerves of a considerable size, in which, most commonly, although not universally observed, are disseminated numerous small nervous ganglions. To this nervous plexus thus constituted has been given the name of *renal plexus*, from its destination and distribution to the *renal* or *emulgent* artery, and its branches through the substance of the kidney and the supra-renal capsules. Anatomy teaches us that whether the capsular artery arises directly from the aorta, or whether it arises as a branch from the renal or emulgent artery, filaments from the renal plexus of nerves accompany it in its course of distribution through the substance of the supra-renal capsule. The renal plexus of the right side of the body has a direct communication by numerous nervous filaments with the hepatic plexus, whilst the renal plexus of the left side of the body has a direct communication by numerous similar filaments with the splenic plexus, and both right and left renal plexus receive filaments of reinforcement from the great stomachic nervous plexus. These anatomical facts have no inconsiderable bearing even upon the subject now under consideration — the hysterical constitution or temperament; but when I come to speak of the chief or prominent symptoms, the symptomatology of hysteria, and more particularly of its paroxysmal characters, the pathological application of these anatomical facts will, I trust, be rendered at once evident and important, and consequently well deserving

close attention ; and, therefore, I offer no apology for advertising to them at this time. From the lower part of the renal plexus of nerves there pass off certain nervous filaments, which, uniting with others from the mesenteric plexus, form or constitute the plexus of nerves, occasionally attended with a nervous ganglion, from which ganglion, when present, and plexus, arise the special nerves which, in their course of distribution, accompany the spermatic blood-vessels proceeding to the testicles in the male, and to the ovaries in the female, and to the external parts of generation. To this nervous plexus thus constituted, anatomists have given the name *spermatic plexus*, and it is the *spermatic plexus* chiefly, together with another plexus named the hypogastric plexus, that, in my judgment, plays so important a part in the morbid phenomena observable in cases of hysteria. At the proper time I shall produce evidence in favour of this statement ; that it is to the *spermatic nervous plexus* we must look, rather than to the uterus, for satisfactory explanation of the morbid phenomena of this disease ; in fact, certain of the phenomena or symptoms observed in some cases of hysteria could not possibly be accounted for, on the supposition that they were altogether, or even in any way, due to derangements in the uterus, as, for instance, what shall we say in regard to cases of hysteria occurring in the male sex, as I maintain they do occasionally ; for in these cases, no one will be absurd enough to impute such, whenever they occur, to derangements in an organ never present, but always absent in that sex.

I entertain but little, if any, doubt that these two nervous plexuses, with their nervous ganglia, the spermatic and hypogastric plexus, constitute the chief efficient factors or producers of that assemblage of symptoms constituting the disease now referred to. Let it be well borne in mind that the nervous energy, agency, or power supplied by them is distributed to all the parts or organs contained within the pelvis in the two sexes, both male and female ; as also to the lower intestines, the rectum, to the various parts of the bladder, to the uterus, to the broad ligament, and to the Fallopian tube, with its fimbriated extremity, in the female. Anatomy further teaches us that these nervous plexuses and ganglia contain but few nervous filaments derived from the cerebro-spinal axis, but that they are constituted almost entirely of derivations from the trunk of the great sympathetic or internal intercostal nerve.

I have repeatedly, when, on various occasions, reading papers on nervous diseases before the medical societies of the

metropolis, maintained, that further investigations into the functions of this great nerve and its derivations, would lay open to us a very wide and extended domain of pathology, and consequently of medical treatment of disease; and that further research into this subject would not fail to pour upon us a flood of light, over some of the dark, obscure paths of medicine, along which we had hitherto groped our way, guided only by the dimness of empiricism itself. A further and more extended acquaintance with the normal healthy operations in the organic, as well as in the animal nervous system, cannot fail to enable us to understand, and consequently to appreciate at a better and true pathological value, the abnormal and unhealthy operations observed in the same nervous systems respectively. Already the scientific labours of Claude-Bernard, Brown-Séquard, and many others in the same field, have enabled us to comprehend much that, until now, was always painfully, and often pathologically obscure, and consequently unsatisfactory.

The importance of a due estimation of temperament or constitution in discussing the disease now under consideration, will be made even more evident that it now is, when I come to treat of another severe, intractable disease of the nervous system—epilepsy; in doing which it is my intention to enter at some length upon the consideration of what I term the epileptic temperament or constitution. For, as in the production of the paroxysms of epilepsy, so in the productions of paroxysms of hysteria, two states or conditions of the body, or certain parts of the body, are absolutely essential; in the former disease—epilepsy, these are—first, a tendency or disposition of the brain or spinal cord, or both together, to assume a state of contraction more readily than in health; and, secondly, the presence of some irritating cause or causes, which in their operation upon this, or upon these organs, compel or excite this tendency or disposition to assume an abnormal or unhealthy state of contraction. So, too, in the latter disease, hysteria, two states or conditions of the body, or of certain parts of the body, are absolutely essential, these are—first, a tendency or disposition of certain parts of the nervous system to assume a state of contraction more readily than in health; and, secondly, the presence of some irritating cause or causes, which, in their operation upon these parts of the nervous system, compel or excite this tendency or disposition to assume an abnormal or unhealthy state of contraction. It will, I think, be in my power to adduce good evidence, derived from cases met with in practice, denoting a

manifest connection between these two severe, intractable diseases ; in fact, in very severe forms of hysterical paroxysms, it is by no means easy to discriminate between the two diseases. One of the very worst cases of hysteria I ever witnessed, was one under my own care in this neighbourhood, in which the attack or paroxysm so closely resembled an attack or paroxysm of epilepsy, that it was not until after consulting with a physician of acknowledged reputation that I was able to satisfy myself which of two diseases I had to treat. Severe, however, as was that attack, the patient had a good, complete recovery, and has continued well from that time until this, a period now of some years duration.

Amongst the lectures which Dr. Brown-Séquard delivered at the National Hospital for Paralysis and Epilepsy, were one or two upon Hysteria ; but, unfortunately, I was unable to hear them, owing to other engagements ; yet, from conversation with him subsequently, I think I am correct in stating that he is of opinion that the hysterical temperament, or tendency to hysteria, is not unfrequently as intractable to deal with, as difficult to cure as, even if not more so than, is epilepsy itself.

The ancient practitioners of the healing art, in their discourses on medicine, direct the attention of their readers to what they called *temperaments*, or different conditions of *constitutions* ; but for the want of accurate physiological knowledge of most parts or organs, as well solid as fluid, of the human framework, they greatly failed in demonstrations in regard to these subjects, or to express the fact ; in other words, their descriptions of these subjects were very imperfect, owing to want of a more exact information. Advancing, progressive scientific information, here as in many other departments of general pathology, has by slow, yet, it is hoped, by no uncertain steps, removed extensively the dark veil of obscurity which long hung suspended between the human mind and the operations of nature. By many of the moderns, too, by which term I would be understood to mean those practitioners of the healing art who flourished and wrote endless treatises on the theory and practice of medicine, the study and observation of the temperaments or constitutions, and consequently of the doctrines deducible therefrom, have been almost altogether neglected. It is much to be desired, that the diverse temperaments and constitutions which undoubtedly exist in nature, differing in different individuals, and in different members of the same families, should be more accurately scrutinized, and more care-

fully observed, by means of light to be derived from a more enlarged acquaintance with the principles of modern science, as applied to various functions of the body, as the circulation of the blood, respiration, absorption, and innervation, &c., &c. ; the application, for instance, of organic chemistry to the known differences in constitution between arterial and nervous blood, the recent discoveries made in the anatomy and physiology of the lymphatic system, the exact constitution of the fluids therein contained ; the chemical analysis, in fact, of all the solids and fluids of the body, with that of the various secretions and excretions, as they exist in different individuals ; the discoveries in regard to, and experiments upon, the nerves themselves ; discoveries in regard to, and experiments upon, electricity, galvanism, &c., and their modifications ; also upon heat, light, and the atmosphere, &c., &c., must unitedly tend to remove from the medical mind much that still remains of obscurity, ignorance, and prejudice.

To our own English physician—Sydenham—more is perhaps due, as an observer of nervous disorders, than to any other physician living before his time ; he has, moreover, in his works, left behind him one of the best and most graphic descriptions of the vapours in females ; to him, too, is due the clear perception of diseases of the nerves—doubtless hysteria in one or more of its forms—assuming the characters of almost every other form of disorder. I am not sure that he speaks of hysteria, and of nervous diseases, as proteiform in character ; although, however, he remarks that at one or more times nervous disorders are capable of assuming the characters of almost every disease ; and that all these symptoms observed, however varied and multiplied, depend solely, or for the most part, upon too much or too little, upon excess or upon deficiency, of nervous action, agency, or energy. In the course of my papers upon affections of the nervous system, I shall have repeated occasions to refer to the writings and opinions of Sydenham ; and possibly, next to him, amongst other physicians of the last century belonging to our own country, to one of a later date—Cheyne—who, like his predecessor, Sydenham, has left behind him many valuable observations upon the general pathology of nervous disorders. Much attention, however, as Sydenham had given to, and much observation as he had made upon, diseases of the nervous class, neither he, nor his contemporary Willis, nor even later, Cheyne, nor his contemporary Hoffman, most probably from insufficient physiological knowledge, appear to have recognized the true pathological import of many of the symptoms which they severally observed and recorded.

To a French physician, Charles Pison, of Lorraine, is justly due the merit of being the first to assign to hysteria its proper nosological position, as a disorder of the nervous system, as he did in a work published in 1618, some years before either Sydenham or Willis gave to the world the results of their very valuable observations, whether relating to practical medicine, or to anatomical and physiological researches.

It must have occurred to the observation of all intelligent medical practitioners, that amongst the many, the various agencies, operating to produce disorders, well or imperfectly recognised, of the nervous system, a suppression or non-evacuation of healthy, natural discharges, or secretions from the human body, whether male or female, would be one of the most common and efficient of all known influences tending to such derangements of health.

This being so, it is not surprising, indeed it is no more than might be expected, that in a disease like that under consideration, Hysteria, or in a class of diseases commonly spoken of as Nervous Diseases, which, like hysteria itself, more generally affects the female than the male sex, the suppression or non-evacuation of the natural periodical secretion peculiar to women should, in many instances, play a most important part in the production of such diseases.

The subject is fresh and vivid before my own mind, having at this time two cases under my observation, in which the suppression or cessation of the accustomed menstrual evacuation has had much, if not nearly all, to do in evoking a series of hysterical symptoms of an aggravated nature, so aggravated as, happily, not commonly to be met with or observed, in which the influence of the suppression or cessation of this secretion is very well marked, and in which nature is taking her accustomed course, but from some cause or other taking that course attended with deviations of a most irregular, troublesome description.

In the following remarks I shall by no means restrict myself to that period of life, as in these two instances just mentioned, at which the menstrual discharge or secretion ceases of itself, or naturally, as it is termed; but, on the contrary, I will include the entire period of female life, from the age of fourteen or fifteen up to forty-five or fifty years of age. The natural menstrual secretion peculiar to women may, and frequently does, conduce to the development of various diseases of the nervous system, and, amongst others, to the development of hysteria in several, yet altogether different conditions; as, for example, in young persons in whom this natural

evacuation is about to take place at first; in persons of delicate sensibility, at every period of its reappearance; in persons in whom it becomes suddenly suppressed; in persons of a similar constitution at the usual natural period of its cessation, which, as in the two cases above briefly referred to, is commonly in this country at about fifty years of age; it may also lay the foundation of many distressing, troublesome symptoms, affecting the nervous system when it becomes too abundant, especially if, at any time, amounting, as it sometimes does, almost to hæmorrhage. The approach of the period of puberty, in either sex, male or female, is always more or less critical, yet, in the female, it is peculiarly so, for many and obvious reasons, amongst others, for the supervention of the special secretion now adverted to; another reason being this, that in females the nervous system is commonly more delicate and more highly developed than in males; and in consequence thereof the sensibility and mobility of the entire framework of the body are more easily excited than in males; and, moreover, their ordinary mode of life conduces to many accidents tending to evoke and establish disorders of the nervous system, whereas the ordinary mode of life amongst young persons of the opposite sex offers an easy remedy to such accidents, either by way of prevention or of cure.

The concurrence of many accidental circumstances to females at this period of life, favours the production of a high degree of mobility and of sensibility in the nervous system; and it is by no means rare to witness in such, at this period of life, an extremely nervous and hysterical tendency; and which may continue, and even increase, in intensity, until the natural periodical secretion is completely and regularly established. At no period of life is it of more importance to direct attention to whatever may tend to strengthen and fortify the nervous system, in readiness for the numerous and daily recurring exigencies of life and of society.

All of us, as medical practitioners, must be perfectly familiar with numerous cases of this nature, by way of illustration of the foregoing remarks.

The suppression, however, of the natural periodical secretion is very commonly attended with phenomena denoting extremely important disorder of the nervous system, even after it shall have been well established, and for some time even performed with due regularity.

Hysterical and other symptoms affecting the nervous system occurring concomitantly with suppression of the menstrual discharge, whether they operate in the relation

either of cause or of effect as regards the suppression, will, as I know, assume the most extraordinary character, so as almost to surpass belief; and I have no doubt that in days now happily gone by, in days of darker ignorance than the present, such cases imperfectly recognized, and inaccurately observed, were, by the unthinking and unreflecting, ascribed to evil, if not to satanic influences, in fact, such unfortunate patients were spoken of as being *possessed*.

Some time ago, I had a patient under my care affected very much after this mode, and in whom the customary periodical evacuation peculiar to females was totally suppressed for many months, in fact, writing now from recollection, I may say, for upwards of twelve months, and whose conduct at times during this period was very extravagant and very extraordinary. I have myself witnessed in this patient some of the most out-of-the-way actions. I have seen this patient cling to and clamber up her bedposts as we may see cats cling to and clamber up posts or trees; on other occasions I have seen the same patient crawl along the floor of the room and over objects lying in the way, just as we may see some reptiles and other lower animals crawl along the ground. This patient was an intelligent person, and would sometimes describe her own condition as that of one *possessed*, and who needed to be *exorcised*. All these irregular extravagant actions subsided, and ultimately totally disappeared upon restoration of the bodily health, including a regular return of the usual periodical secretion peculiar to females.

The nervous system of females, especially of such as are liable to hysteria in any of its varied forms, is extremely likely to become more or less affected at the period of life when this periodical secretion altogether ceases or becomes permanently suppressed.

One of the most distinguished practical physicians of the last century, our own countryman, Dr. Fothergill, in his valuable work entitled "Medical Observations and Inquiries," has treated most ably of the management proper at the period of the cessation of the menses in females; and to this work of Dr. Fothergill I take the liberty to refer such of my readers as may be interested in this particular department of pathology. This work is not now before me, and therefore I do not offer any quotations from that author; and, besides, his observations therein are not specially directed to disorders and derangements of the nervous system, whether hysterical or otherwise; therefore I content myself with merely direct-

ing attention to one of the most useful and practical essays in our own language bearing upon that subject, without especial reference to nervous pathology.

At this period of life, and under the circumstances in which the human female is then placed, it cannot be matter of surprise that the nervous system in that sex should at that time in many females become liable to the supervention of any symptoms whatever denoting disorder or derangement of that system, and the hysterical, more, perhaps, than any other females, become affected with various forms of that proteiform disease to which they are so unfortunately subjected.

In order to confirm, to corroborate the statements that have been hitherto advanced on this subject, let us now consider, and endeavour to realize to our minds, what is the actual state of things with which we have to deal; for, in my opinion, few conditions in which the human body can be placed (and be it observed, I am now speaking exclusively of the human female), will illustrate more pointedly the pathological principles which it is the express object of these essays on affections of the nervous system to teach and to enforce. Let us, I say, present vividly to our minds what is the precise pathological condition of a human female, of a nervous, and still more so, of one of a decidedly hysterical constitution or temperament, at the time of the suppression, or of the cessation, of the customary periodical evacuation of the menses. What may we reasonably expect, or, to speak more emphatically, what may we not reasonably expect, as the result of the present actual state of things in such subjects? What do we not, on some occasions, meet with in our patients at this so well denominated critical period? I do not hesitate to affirm, that the very worst, the most troublesome cases, of the nervous and hysterical class, that I have met with, have been in females at this time of life.

Nor need this be matter of surprise to us, as practitioners, under the circumstances in which our patients are then placed. For, what is then the condition of the entire mass of the blood then circulating throughout the body, and thereby affecting the entire mass of the nervous tissue of the framework, whether this nervous tissue be in the form of nerve fibre or of nervous ganglia? Some of the older physicians have spoken of the blood at such periods as being an acrid fluid, and some others have even spoken of it as possessing poisonous properties; but, without going so far as these, we may, I think, confidently regard the blood of the human

female at such times, and speak of it, as an impure, unpurged, unpurified fluid pervading the entire framework of the body. This being so, need we be surprised to meet with, in the nervous, and in the hysterical, vitiated secretions of one or more organs ; ought we to be surprised to perceive in some, the indications of vitiated, perverted sensations ; to perceive in some, evidences of vitiated, perverted emotions ; and even in some few, evidences of a vitiated, perverted intelligence ? An application of the soundest medical reasoning would almost lead us to expect the existence of many such phenomena under such existing circumstances. For if blood degeneration betokens, nay more, if it involves or implies thought degeneration, is it not to be expected that it (that is, blood degeneration) should still more betoken, involve, or imply sensation degeneration, motion degeneration, secretion and excretion degeneration, and in fine, tissue degeneration, with all its essential, necessary, concomitant derangement and disorder of the entire material framework of the body ? Surely, it is merely to reason from anatomy and physiology to pathology, to advance and maintain such opinions as these just now heretofore enunciated. All the phenomena observable in nervous and hysterical patients at this time of life combine to lend support, and to substantiate the correctness of, the views here laid down. It is more particularly at this time of life, and under these circumstances, in which we have to do with the human system suffering in the ordinary course of Nature, from a depraved, vitiated, degenerated condition of that vital fluid, the blood, that we meet with those exceedingly troublesome, nervous and hysterical disorders, which almost invariably, when at all severe and protracted, despoil life of its pleasures and its enjoyments, and which at the same time are such a frequent source of anxiety and annoyance to the friends and acquaintances of our unfortunate patients.

It is, moreover, under these and similar circumstances, that those nervous disorders and derangements of the bodily health supervene, in which, in consequence of their influence on the moral nature and character of our patients, they are unhappily disposed to regard nearly all surrounding occurrences from a wrong, a perverted point of view, and these wrong, these perverted aspects of surrounding occurrences determine their ordinary conduct and behaviour ; and deporting themselves accordingly, their common course of actions is thus rendered an enigma, a mystery alike to themselves and to their acquaintances ; in fact, such sufferers may be

said to have undergone an unfortunate change, an unhappy metamorphosis as well of mind as of body. Incomplete, however, as our present knowledge on these topics must be confessed to be, we yet possess sufficient evidence to convince us, that the quality of the blood must have considerable effect, more or less, as the case may be, not only upon the circulation of that fluid itself, but also upon the various tissues of the body subjected to its influence. We cannot but admit that this must be so, looking at the complex composition of the blood when in health, a composition intimately connected with its own proper vitality, and which has, at the same time, such important relations to every part and to every organ of the body, including especially those parts and those organs of the body, recognised as constituting the nervous masses making up the entire nervous system. Under the head of treatment of hysteria, I shall hope to enlarge much further upon this important pathological subject; for the present, however, I content myself with stating, that both the cerebral and the ganglionic nerves must be engaged in this relation; but in what precise intercommunication with each other, and with the entire mass of the blood, and the vascular system, neither anatomy nor physiology have as yet sufficiently explained; still, these sciences have, even now, afforded us sufficient evidence that these most important relations between blood and nerves do exist.

In discussing the subject of the hysterical constitution or temperament, it is incumbent upon us to ask ourselves this question: Is this disease—hysteria—hereditary? I have no doubt whatever, from actual experience, derived from observation, as well as from reading descriptions thereof in the works of medical authors who have written upon this malady, that this question must be answered in the affirmative, and that, in some instances, hysteria is directly transmitted from mother to child; but, in regard to diseases of the nervous system in general, as affected by parental transmission, this all but universal law, may be expressed thus: that if one, or still more so, if both parents be affected with almost any disease whatever of the nervous system, the offspring, whether one or more, is with rare exceptions, extremely liable to suffer from some one nervous disease, although the particular disease affecting the offspring may not be exactly the same disease as that affecting the parent or parents. The state of things in relation to parent or parents, and offspring, may be briefly expressed in this manner: given a parent or parents affected with almost any nervous disease,

and the chances are, that the offspring of such parent or parents will, most probably, suffer from nervous diseases in one form or another.

Thus, by way of illustration, one or both parents may suffer, or may have suffered, from epilepsy; yet it by no means follows, that the offspring of such parents shall suffer from that same disease—epilepsy; although it is highly probable that they may suffer from convulsions, or from hysteria, or paralysis, or some other form of nervous disease; or conversely, the parent or parents may suffer, or may have suffered, from paralysis, or hysteria, or convulsive disease of some kind or other, whilst the offspring of such parents shall suffer from epilepsy. In my own practice and observation, I have known instances of this description. I remember, too, distinctly, on one occasion, in conversation with Dr. Brown-Séquard, one of the physicians to the National Hospital for the Paralysed and Epileptic, to have mentioned this circumstance in connection with diseases of the nervous system, when that physician completely concurred in that opinion, as a fact he had frequently observed in nervous patients. One remarkable instance, amongst others of a similar kind, is now before me, in the person of a grandfather, whom I have known for a long time, as affected with partial paralysis, several of whose children suffered from one form or other, of nervous diseases, and his grandchildren, also are to my knowledge sufferers from nervous affections of one kind or another. The very remarkable case of tetanic catalepsy, which was under my notice some few years ago, occurred in a female grandchild of this identical grandfather, who was affected with partial paralysis.

In support of the foregoing statements bearing upon the peculiar, yet varying character of the heriditariness of nervous ailments, as transmitted from parent or parents to their offspring, or from direct or remote ancestors to their direct or remote progeny, I now take leave to adduce the following instance of this kind, in connection with the nervous affections, although not of the hysterical class; I have at this time, under my own observation, an interesting, intelligent young lady, of about sixteen or seventeen years of age, who is affected, although but slightly, with sleep-walking, somnambulism, whose father has been frequently under my care, in consequence of severe and protracted nervous affections, assuming a great variety of symptoms, both physical and psychical, and whose paternal grandfather and grandmother suffered long and severely during their lives from one or more nervous affections. The grandfather when in middle life, had

an attack of apoplexy, followed by complete hemiplegia, from which he completely recovered, yet, leaving him, throughout the remainder of a good long life, affected with brain-disease at times, almost amounting to insanity. The paternal grandmother, from the middle period of her life, suffered at times from local or partial epilepsy, attended with persistent partial hemiplegia until her death, which took place at a somewhat advanced age. The particulars of this case of somnambulism, I shall hope to lay before my readers when treating of sleep, dreaming, illusions, or delusions, with other psychical conditions bearing upon nervous affections attended with *impaired* or *perverted* sensation and intelligence. Just as we sometimes observe a constitutional or hereditary weakness in most other parts or organs of the human framework in both sexes, so, in like manner, we not unfrequently observe a similar weakness in the various portions of the nervous tissue pervading the human body, whether male or female; and, moreover, we may affirm, that just in proportion as this constitutional or hereditary weakness of the nervous system is more or less strongly developed in the individual, in like proportion is the same weakness easy or difficult of eradication; and in some exceptional cases, although it may not be absolutely ineradicable, and, consequently, incurable, still, such rare cases will of necessity demand the utmost care and attention that medical skill can afford, throughout all periods of life. In regard to females, perhaps there is no habitual practice that has done more to favour the unhealthy development of any latent constitutional or hereditary weakness of the nervous system, than the pernicious custom of tight lacing a custom that so long prevailed in their physical training; and of all the unnatural errors connected with the physical education of young ladies, this has always been one of the most mistaken, and one of the most mischievous as to its results upon the entire nervous system of those exposed to its influence.

It has been known to produce an excessive, an undue mobility of the entire nervous system, which has chiefly manifested itself at about the age of from thirteen to sixteen years. As I am now adverting only to the nervous and hysterical constitution or temperament, I forbear any further allusion to this practice amongst females, with reference to its equally mischievous effects upon other important organs and functions of the female framework. Amongst the influences which we should naturally expect, attended with bad effects upon the hysterical constitution or temperament, are

the suppression or retention of the natural secretions and excretions of the body ; for, if such secretions or excretions as in health should be evacuated, are morbidly retained within the body ; or, if, on the other hand, such, as in health should be retained, are evacuated from the body, we cannot be surprised, nay rather, we should expect, that among other parts of the body likely to suffer from these irregularities, and so to become diseased, the nervous system in its various parts would become affected with varied and numerous derangements. That this is so, all observed and recorded medical experience combine to substantiate.

Whilst thus briefly adverting to the bad results of suppressed secretions or excretions, I forbear to enter now into any detail as to the special, the particular, effects that are well known to ensue upon the suppression or retention of special natural discharges. At another time I may hereafter enlarge upon this subject.

In confirmation of what has been here advanced, we may remark that there are few parts of the human framework that are not weak, and occasionally imperfect in some families ; so much is this the case, that in a physical as well as in a moral sense, most, if not all of us, may be said to have our weak points ; parts of our bodies which ordinarily are the first to take on a morbid action, and if this be truly so, in regard to many other parts of our physical frame, it is by no means difficult to comprehend that any weakness or imperfection of the nervous system should be as hereditary as the weakness or imperfection of any other part or organ of the body.

Thus we see, as we might reasonably expect, that apoplexy, paralysis of various kinds, epilepsy, convulsions, and hysteria may be, and very frequently are, transmitted from parent or parents to their offspring.

The facility to acquire the aptitude or tendency to hysteria depends greatly upon age and upon sex. There are, however, some individuals of both sexes so fortunately constituted as to their physical framework, so strong, so robust, in whom the nervous system is so well developed as not to be affected with undue mobility, and not to be unduly affected either by external or internal impressions ; and in whom the muscles are so firm and tense as not easily to be susceptible of undue contraction, so as to be thrown into states of convulsion, and who, consequently, do not appear to be susceptible of attacks of nervous diseases, unless from the application of unusual, and it may be really accidental and uncommon exciting causes. In these rare and fortunate individuals,

we are almost compelled to admit the persistent existence of that natural and beautiful harmony of part with part, which characterizes good sound health ; a healthy harmony existing between the blood on the one hand, and the nervous masses on the other ; such a harmony as enables each part to perform its appropriate function in the human economy, and thus enabling the individual to possess and enjoy a large amount of physical well-being. We may easily suppose some such healthy harmony of part with part to exist in the bodies of many animals, wild and domesticated, whose life, as long as it lasts, is one continued period of physical enjoyment and well-being.

When we meet with this formidable, troublesome disease hysteria, in its exalted, may I say, in its exaggerated condition, and by this, I mean, where it presents itself to our notice as medical practitioners, in patients in whom not only the bodily, the physical, framework is more or less affected ; but, at the same time, the intellectual and moral framework, (if I may be allowed the expression) are also affected ; we have, as it seems to me, a derangement of that part or, of those parts of the human framework which connect together man's physical and man's psychical nature.

Not long since, whilst engaged in friendly conversation with an intelligent medical acquaintance upon this subject, I suggested to him that such cases of diseases as these exalted, exaggerated instances of hysteria, might with propriety be designated as cases of *somapsychopathy*, denoting their combined disorder or derangement of body and of mind.

Regarding hysteria from this point of view, we may claim for it, when intensified as in cases now under consideration, a very high, possibly the highest, place in our nosological classification ; a higher place, in fact, in a nosological arrangement, than we can claim even for that formidable disease epilepsy, which, formidable as it doubtless is, still appears to me to be a more purely physical disorder than hysteria. In support of this opinion, I remark, that we may occasionally witness attacks of epilepsy in animals, and very frequently attacks of convulsions in them. I have myself seen epilepsy in the horse, the particulars of which I forwarded to the *Veterinarian*, a monthly journal devoted to veterinary science ; and it is well known that Dr. Brown-Séguard was accustomed to produce, at will, epileptiform attacks or seizures in guinea-pigs ; yet, notwithstanding these observations of convulsive affections in animals, no one, I apprehend, would assert that, in any animal lower in the scale of being than the human animal, he had

seen attacks or paroxysms of hysteria ; this disease, as it appears to me, puts forward its claims for dominion only over poor suffering human nature, leaving brute nature totally exempt from its control and authority. Comparative pathology may doubtless throw considerable light upon many of the diseases that affect our common humanity ; but I fear that it will not contribute *directly* very much to our stock of knowledge in regard to hysteria, although *indirectly*, in regard to convulsive diseases, it may possibly, hereafter aid in removing some portion of that error and ignorance concerning these, which, unhappily, still becloud our intellect, and thus too successfully baffle, and sometimes altogether interpose between our well-intentioned efforts, and our patient's welfare and restoration to health.

I will not, on the present occasion, trouble my readers by bringing under their notice the ordinary and, therefore, well known symptoms of the more common forms of hysteria ; these are to be found, at considerable length, and sometimes described in graphic detail, in most of our works on systematic medicine, and that treat of the general principles of medicine as well as of the practice of physic. My object rather, will be, in the present communication, to give the leading features, the more prominent outlines of a case of this disease of more than common severity, that has been under my own care.

The patient in this instance was an intelligent lady, unmarried, rather over than under fifty years of age, consequently, at a period of life when the natural periodical evacuation, peculiar to the female, ordinarily ceases ; her constitution or temperament was more than commonly nervous or hysterical ; and, as might under these circumstances, be readily supposed, she came, in the first instance, under my notice, presenting many of the more common characters of hysteria ; yet, as the disease gradually became developed, the case presented in addition thereto, many of the characters or symptoms of those severe and aggravated forms of the disease to which I have already drawn attention. In addition to the ordinary characters of hysteria, there were, not unfrequently, paroxysms of *perverted*, *involuntary* movements of various parts of the body, chiefly, however, confined to the trunk ; and, at first, almost restricted to the left side of the trunk, yet occasionally affecting both lower extremities ; these *perverted* movements by degrees extended upwards, so as at last to affect, although in a slighter measure, both upper extremities, attended concurrently with

occasional palpitations of the heart, and heavy, laborious respiration. Subsequently, the patient displayed an excessive general restlessness of the body, so that, when not lying down on her couch, or when not in bed, she was almost incessantly in bodily motion or action of some one kind or another; seldom, or but very rarely, if ever, sitting down, and sometimes, not even when taking her meals; she would very frequently be in bodily motion of some description even whilst standing, and still more frequently, she would walk hurriedly about from room to room, or in or around the garden, or in other places adjacent to the house in which she resided.

This undue, excessive restlessness of the body, not unfrequently assumed the form of what is not inaptly termed fidgetiness, indicated by all sorts of low, vulgar, actions, such as biting the finger nails, picking the nose, scratching the head, and pulling out the hairs of the head one by one. To such an extent were these practices indulged in, that the finger nails were bitten almost as low down as the lunula itself, and by almost incessant scratching of the scalp of the head, it was rendered in most places quite sore and even raw and bloody. This excessive restlessness of the body generally was followed by, and accompanied with, an equally excessive motion of the muscles of the tongue, engaged in talking, so that there was a corresponding excessive talkativeness, so much so, as to be exceedingly fatiguing to her usual companions. When remonstrated with, and requested to be silent,—“to hold her tongue”—her reply was, “I cannot, I must talk, for I cannot help it.” The most ordinary subject of this talkativeness, or conversation, was almost without exception, herself, and her own peculiar ailment, and bodily and mental condition; and this incessant talking about herself and her condition ultimately assumed a form of the most intense selfishness or egotism that I have ever at any time witnessed. This form of egotism or of intense selfishness was frequently expressed after this manner, as thus: “I seem to want everybody and everything, and I seem to want these always; I am not willing that anything whatever should be done until I am better than I am just now.”

At the commencement of the attack there was no perceptible impairment or derangement of the special senses, nor of the general cuticular sensation; the sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell were then severally unimpaired. As the disease progressed, however, the organs of sight, of hearing, and of touch became more or less impaired in their

functions, and their respective sensations became consequently more or less *impaired* or *perverted*; for, at times, the patient would complain that objects seen did not make their proper healthy impression upon the eyes; that at times she could not see so as to read distinctly; and at times she would complain of deafness, sometimes of one ear sometimes of the other, and sometimes, though not frequently, of both ears at once; and moreover, her sense of touch of minute articles, as pins and needles, and other articles in common use with ladies, was at times *impaired*, and inefficient, for general purposes of usefulness or amusement.

I now proceed to show in what manner the several nerves, with their appropriate muscular apparatus, concerned in the production of voice, and of articulate speech, were, in this patient, morbidly effected.

Anatomy teaches us, that the special nerves herein concerned are derived, for the most part, from the eighth pairs of cerebral nerves, consisting of the glosso-pharyngeal branch and of the superior and inferior or recurrent laryngeal branches of this same eighth pair of cerebral nerves: together with branches or filaments derived from the ninth pairs of cerebral nerves, the so-called lingual, or hypo-glossal nerves.

This morbid, *perverted* action of these various nerves, and of their appropriate muscles, was indicated by the occasional and, therefore, spasmodic, yet unusual tone of voice when speaking. I, more than once, observed the tone of voice to resemble somewhat that of some kind of household dog; not unfrequently the voice was pitched in an altogether unnaturally high, shrill key, and very commonly disagreeably loud in its tone, accompanied with very rapid utterance of words; and all this, too, even in spite of or in opposition to all well-meaning, friendly remonstrance to talk or speak more slowly and quietly, or, in other words, not to vociferate so loudly.

In this particular case, and I have, moreover, in the course of my practice, in private life, witnessed some others of a somewhat similar description; the patient from time to time exhibited morbid phenomena, denoting a diseased or disordered condition of nearly all, if not all, the nerves of the body; for there was at times a *perverted*, rather than an *impaired*, action of the *motor* nerves, which extend from the upper portions of the cerebro-spinal axis downwards to the termination of the cerebro-spinal axis; or, to take the case in the opposite direction, as it first came under my care, and as it suits my own purpose better to describe it, there was

at times, a *perverted* action of the muscles supplied by their appropriate nervous stimulus, whatever may be the precise nature of this appropriate nervous stimulus, influence, or agency; there was, I repeat, from time to time, a *perverted* action of the muscles supplied by the appropriate nerves, extending upwards from the *sacral* termination to the *cerebral* termination of the cerebro-spinal axis. Not only so, but even more than this, I am of opinion that there is abundant evidence now before me to warrant me in coming to the conclusion that, in this patient, not only were the nerves, and nervous masses, plexuses and ganglia, which, taken together, make up or constitute the cerebro-spinal system of nerves, morbidly affected in this patient; but that, to a very considerable extent, the nerves, and nervous masses, plexuses and ganglia, which, taken together, make up or constitute the sympathetic system of nerves, were more or less also morbidly affected.

From the gradually progressive supervention of the perverted muscular movements, choreic movements, as I have elsewhere termed them, of the trunk and face, it is evident that the sacral, lumbar, dorsal, cervical, and cerebral *motor* nerves were more or less morbidly affected in this patient. The frequent or even occasional occurrence of these automatic, involuntary, choreic movements of the lower and upper extremities and intermediate parts of the trunk of the body, and also of the various muscles of the face, concurrently combine to indicate, that the several parts of the *motor* nervous apparatus now referred to, were in an unhealthy, *impaired*, or irregular functional activity. The muscles employed in giving the varied forms of expression to the countenance were, at times, thrown into remarkable irregular functional activity, thus imparting singular shades and varieties of expression to the patient's countenance; from these observed facts, I infer, that the nerves supplying these muscles of expression with nervous energy, whatever may be the nature of this nervous energy, as well as the nervous masses of ganglia, from which the nerves themselves derive their peculiar force or power, were more or less affected with disorder or derangement of their respective functions; for anatomy teaches us that the nerves which supply with nervous energy the muscles of the face are, for the most part, derived from the fifth and from the motor portion of the seventh pairs of cerebral nerves which have their so-called origin at the upper part of the cerebro-spinal axis. An inspection of the base of the brain, as commonly seen in

the dissecting-room, or in the dead-house, will confirm this statement.

Further, I may add, that the *sensory* nerves which supply the general cutaneous surface were in this patient, at times, in a state of hyperæsthesia; I do not use this term, in the present instance, as denoting the presence of pain, for the patient seldom, or almost never, complained of pain in any part whatever of the body; but rather, as denoting an exalted, *perverted* state of sensibility of the general cutaneous surface; and from the phenomena I occasionally observed, I was led to the conclusion that a brighter light of day than ordinary exerted an undue, irregular action upon the cutaneous membrane, which was also, I conclude, more or less affected by other imponderable agents besides light, such as, for instance, heat and atmospheric electricity. I am decidedly of opinion that, in this patient, light, heat, and electricity as existing in the atmosphere, and more especially the former of these agents, *light*, exerted a very marked influence upon the cutaneous membrane. For, on very bright days, and in what is commonly termed cheerful weather, the patient was more than usually excited to general motion of the body; so much so at times, that it, the light, appeared to act too powerfully, not so much upon the organ of the sense of vision, as upon the organ of the general cuticular sense. The patient would not unfrequently complain that in bright days and during cheerful weather, she could not control a general restlessness of the body, that, in common language, she could not keep herself still and quiet in one position of the body, but that she felt herself compelled to move about from room to room of her house; and this, too, at times, with considerable energy and rapidity of motion.

Now, anatomy teaches us that the nerves of sensation supplying the general cutaneous surface are derived from the various portions of the cerebro-spinal axis, and therefore I regard this general restlessness of the body as the expression of an excito-motor, or reflex action, induced by irritation of the sensory nerves of the cutaneous surface; and as such, altogether automatic, *involuntary*, and independent of the action of the will exerting its influence upon the motor nerves of the trunk of the body. At these same periods of bright days, and cheerful weather, the patient was most unwilling to subject her body to any kind of restraint from the action of tight clothing; this was preferred to be of the lightest and loosest description of apparel. When walking in the garden she preferred to be without cap or bonnet, and much more

so whilst within doors, when she would seldom be prevailed upon to wear any kind of cap fastened in the ordinary mode upon the head, the hair of which consequently was most commonly worn in its natural unadorned state.

The visage or physiognomy of this patient at times, without being in any marked degree convulsed or in motion, presented a very remarkable appearance, as may very easily be imagined, if we consider that on these occasions the action of the muscles of expression of the countenance was not spasmodic, as in convulsions, although it was altogether *perverted* in its character.

In direct relation to the fore-mentioned circumstance, namely, the influence of light or bright weather upon the disordered nervous system of this patient, I may state, that this circumstance might be considered as nothing more than a part of the influence which weather is well known to exert upon the human subject, even when in health, not to speak of its more potent influence upon the human subject when suffering from disease.

In the able and classical work of Sir Henry Holland, entitled "Medical Notes and Reflections," the author has devoted one entire chapter to the consideration of the influence of weather in relation to disease, yet, in that chapter, he does not enter upon the discussion of the influence of *light* as an element upon disease; although it may be possible he would regard *light* as so closely connected with the term weather, as not to be dissevered from it when treating of the influence of weather upon disease. In the case of my patient it seemed to me that variations in degree of this imponderable agent, *light*, exercised a most marked influence upon the nervous system, and this too, not through the organs of vision, but rather by means of its influence upon the general cutaneous surface.

In opposition to this view of the subject, I readily admit that it might be alleged, and which I have attempted to describe, were due, not so much to *light*, *per se*, as to heat or alterations in temperature, and consequently to atmospheric electricity; for the recent investigations of modern science have made evident to us, that the existence of bright light is coincident with the existence of increased heat or temperature, and the presence or existence of both light and heat are attendant with an evolution of atmospheric electricity; for it is now known that no two bodies can be present to each other, having different temperatures, nor can even separate parts of the same body be heated to different degrees of

temperature, without causing an evolution of electrical change.

This important subject cannot now be fully discussed; still, I need not forbear quoting from the chapter in Sir H. Holland's book to which I have but just now adverted. The chapter is entitled, "Influence of weather in relation to disease:"—

"Little though its influence has yet been defined, I believe that the electrical state of the atmosphere is that, of all its conditions, which has most important and diffused effects on the animal economy; more rapid and pervading than any other, and is one of the vital stimuli more intimately allied to the functions of the nervous system. It is that, further, which most closely blends itself, either as cause or effect, with all other meteorological changes; producing thereby many of the difficulties already noticed in estimating their relative amount of influence." And further, in the same chapter, Sir H. Holland writes:—"It is difficult to advert to the effects of atmospheric electricity on the body, either as a vital stimulus or cause of disease, without noticing the question, whether this great natural agent is not itself directly engaged in the functions of the nervous system? If this were eventually determined to be so, the relation of the actions without to those of the same agent within, would present itself under forms still more difficult to apprehend, and little amenable to our present means of research. But, taking the simplest view of the influence of electrical states of air on the human frame, many circumstances occur well deserving notice, though yet wanting the certainty needful to give them a place in science. Without adverting to those singular cases in which the balance of electricity with external objects seem altered by the production of an excess of it within the body, it is obvious that changes of atmospheric electricity have much influence both on the sensations and voluntary powers, producing results variously analogous to those which attend certain morbid states of body more familiar to us."

In many of the various diseases affecting the nervous system—and in none of these more than in the one now under discussion, Hysteria—the subjects of observation, are those in which both matter and mind are simultaneously concerned; matter in its most subtle and complex organization; mind in its almost inexplicable relations to this subtle and complex organization, and both subjected to various influences from without, as well as liable to great changes of state and con-

dition, from morbid actions going on within the body. This being so, the pathological importance of these various morbid affections of the nervous system cannot fail to arrest and detain the attention of all observing and reflecting practitioners.

I have already detailed the leading particulars of a very severe, protracted and intensified form of Hysteria under my own care, and in doing which, I attempted to describe the gradual, yet regular progression of the symptoms or phenomena, as they advanced from below upwards, showing therein that the several motor nerves, with their appropriate muscles, were morbidly affected in this patient. I showed by what means the evidence of morbid affection of the muscles, which anatomy makes known to us, are supplied by motor filaments of the seventh and fifth pairs of cerebral nerves, was almost constantly furnished to me in this particular case ; and I may here mention, that the evidence of similar morbid affection of the muscles supplied with nervous influence or energy, by filaments derived from the sixth, fourth, and third pairs of cerebral nerves, was furnished to me by peculiar spasmodic actions of the two globes of the eyes.

I need not here repeat the evidence, that the second and first pairs of cerebral nerves, namely, the optic and olfactory nerves were morbidly affected ; for I have already stated that the senses of sight and smell were frequently impaired or perverted. This disposes of the bodily or *somatic* portion of the case ; and the *psychical*, mental, or intellectual portion was not less instructive and interesting, in consequence of throwing light upon not a few particulars, necessarily concerned in some of the milder, transitional forms of mental or psychical pathology. The scientific and therefore satisfactory detail, necessary to elucidate the obscure, because imperfectly recognised forms of disease of this description, and of this case in particular, would occupy more time and space than can now be given to this important subject. I should have wished to adduce evidence to show how far, and to what extent in this patient the intellectual functions were or were not morbidly affected. The peculiar actions or manifestations denoting the condition, whether morbid or healthy, of the memory, the imagination, the judgment ; as well as of the emotions, the affections, the conscience, and the will, presented from time to time, very many points of the highest psychological value and importance. As in most, if not in all well-marked cases of hysteria, there was very commonly great impairment of the self-controlling power of the will ; or

to express the same fact in different terms, the emotions, very commonly appeared to antagonise and frequently to overcome that high mental faculty—the will—the queen-regent of the mind.

It would occupy far too much time, as well as space, in this short essay, to give in anything like adequate detail, the particulars of the whole of the treatment adopted in the foregoing case ; although the result of the treatment was in the highest degree satisfactory, alike to the patient, to friends, and to physician. The recovery, the restoration to health was slow, yet gradual.

The general principles involved in the course of treatment to be adopted and persisted in, in this particular disease, are, in brief, as follows :—

Abundance of the best and most nourishishing foods and drinks, occasional use of cordial stimulants, fresh, pure air, copious ablutions with cold and tepid water, as much repose, both of body and mind, as the patient could and would obtain, occasional but not too free purgations, frequent administration of chalybeates, especially of that very agreeable form of them known as steel wine, of which the patient drank very freely ; phosphorus, in various forms and vehicles ; and by way of moral treatment, the avoidance, so far as possible, of all causes or sources of irritation, leaving the patient as much permission to do what was most pleasing and amusing to herself, in modes too varied to be enumerated now.

To comprise within the compass of a few pages of letter-press the extensive subject of therapeutics adapted to diseases of this class, would be a vain and profitless attempt, as well as, if even it were possible, an undertaking that would probably prove not a little wearisome to the reader. In the limited narration of the foregoing cases, the general principles of treatment involved and demanded are more than glanced at ; for here, as in most other diseases, each case must, to a certain extent, be treated upon its individual requirements, and these will of course be furnished according to the skill and judgment of the practitioner in attendance. The appropriate, the proper remedies for ordinary cases of hysteria, are amply detailed in all works that treat of diseases in general, and of the practice of medicine. Tonics, evacuants, anti-spasmodics, and calmants, as a variety of sedatives, will include all, or nearly all the remedies demanded from the stores of the druggist ; whilst in the mode, and form, and time of their administration, will be seen the medical art and

skill of the physician. Of tonics I have already stated, that the chalybeates or preparations of iron have, with me, proved of essential service. Good, generous wine I have also found sometimes instantaneously to act efficiently; and in cases of great irritation, to calm, to soothe, and to tranquillise. As a good and reliable anti-hysteric draught, I do not know a better than repeated doses of rum and milk, sweetened with sugar. In fine—for a whole treatise might be occupied with the discussion of remedies appropriate in this and other nervous disorders—whatever tends to favour the production of healthy blood should claim the earnest attention of the physician.

In the appropriate and successful treatment, not only of the disease now under consideration—hysteria—but also of many others affecting the brain, spinal cord, and nervous system, there is, I conceive, no one element of greater importance than a just estimate of the value of *time*, or continuous duration; for not only hysteria but many others, such as, for instance, epilepsy, chorea, and the various forms of paralysis, as hemiplegia and paraplegia, are in their very nature diseases which from their commencement assume a chronic rather than an acute character; and, therefore, this particular disease, as well as the others just now mentioned, may be reasonably expected to make great demand upon the time and attentive patience both of the practitioner and the attendants, as well as of the sufferers themselves. It should even be borne in mind that Nature as in formation, so too in reparation of tissue, is seldom or never in a hurry, taking time to do well whatever is done for her own requirements.

In the mental or moral treatment of the severe or more exaggerated forms of the disease, whether occurring in the male or in the female sex; I mean by these forms of the disease, such cases as in some of their more prominent symptoms indicate a psychical as well as a somatic or physical derangement or disorder of the system—symptoms which at times compel us to apprehend the transition to or supervention of a disturbance of the intellectual or moral faculties; in the mental or moral treatment of all such and similar cases of the disease it is, I am convinced by experience and observation, and in some cases, too, by a successful experience, important ever to bear in mind, never to lose sight of, the extremely delicate nature of the tissue or tissues morbidly affected in the disease under consideration. These are, on the one hand, the liquid tissue—the blood with its corpuscles; and, on the other hand, the nerve cells and nerve filaments, the former of these, the nerve-cells, constituting for the most part the numerous nervous ganglia scattered

through various parts of the bodily framework ; and, moreover, where they, the nerve-cells, are brought into closest relation with the blood and blood corpuscles. The very extreme delicacy of structure, with the especial and peculiar anatomical arrangement of the nerve cells in the nervous ganglia, must have been well seen and observed by means of the microscope, to be duly and adequately estimated, in order to enforce and inculcate the necessary avoidance of all means or measures adopted throughout the treatment of these cases of disease, wherein such very delicate tissue is morbidly affected, that might by possibility in any way cause or produce a sudden, or too abrupt, or unnatural disturbance, or breaking up or disorganisation of these delicate nerve-cells.

Regarding the subject from this point of view, it will not fail to be seen how important it must be in the mental or moral treatment of this disease to avoid or remove, so far as may be practicable, all causes or sources of annoyance or irritation to patients under our care. And, conversely, the means or measures adopted should, as far as practicable, be of such a nature as are calculated to calm, to soothe, to tranquillise both the body and the mind of patients under our treatment. In many of these and similar cases, the conduct, the deportment, the general demeanour of the ordinary attendants, whether as members of the family of the patients, or as hired nurses or companions to them, is of no little importance. I have, I may here state, been induced to believe that no little mischief to the patients, as well as hindrance to their recovery, has resulted from the injudicious selection of attendants but ill-qualified for their duties. And, conversely, I have known instances where real recovery has commenced, and become apparent, upon the substitution of a proper for an improper attendant or companion.

Underlying, although by no means in the sense of subordination or of inferiority, all the facts, reasonings, or opinions that have been submitted to the reader's notice in the foregoing papers, there has been this one chief, leading, prominent idea, which it is hoped has not only claimed, but has also attracted its due share of attention, as being of the highest importance, not only to the particular subject that has been under consideration—hysteria, but at the same time to the general subject of nervous disorders.

It has been my direct aim and intention in this contribution to medical literature, so far as time and space would allow, to expand and develope this leading idea, this cardinal point, upon which, as it appears to me, so very much of the true pathology of the nervous system must of necessity hinge and depend. This leading idea to which I refer may be

briefly expressed, as the relation physiologically and pathologically subsisting between *blood* and *nerve*, between blood-corpuscle and nerve-cell; or, if I may be allowed the expression, whilst speaking of the entire mass of blood and the entire mass of nervous matter in the human body, the relation between the *blood-tissue* on the one hand, and the *nerve-tissue* on the other, for I am convinced, that the more closely the entire subject of nervous pathology is regarded from this point of view—I do not say to the exclusion of all other aspects of the subject—the more sure and certain will be our knowledge of various nervous diseases, and consequently, the more reasonably may we hope to attain to a more rational and successful treatment of them.

Park street, Grosvenor square, W., 1866.

